

REMARKS

The present invention provides a compact wall-mountable data outlet that brings packet-based network data connectivity closer to a user, enabling multiple user-equipment connections to the network, without requiring multiple connections to a centralized network device (such as a server or router) to support each equipment connection. The intelligence needed to forward data packets is enclosed within the data outlet, making multiple connections unnecessary. To better serve such purpose, the data outlet is configured physically to separate its equipment-interfaces from its premises-interface, thus enabling the mounting of the device in or on a wall. Twelve claims are pending. Product claim 63 is the sole independent. Claims 7, 13-14, 16-21, and 33-34 all ultimately depend on claim 63.

In the Office Action, mailed 05/26/2006, the examiner cites U.S. Pat. No. 5,722,076, issued to M. Sakabe *et al.* on February 24, 1998 (hereinafter, the "Sakabe reference"), pursuant to a rejection of all applicants' claims under 35 U.S.C § 102(b).

The Sakabe reference relates to so-called "Personal Handyphone" (PHS) technology – a mid-90's Japan-originated technology seeking to use lightweight portable wireless telephones as cordless phones in the home and as mobile phones elsewhere. As matter of historical note, within a year of its launch, the PHS system was already being seen as a failure. (See, N. Takezaki, "Japan's Personal Handyphone System, Down for the Count?", COMPUTING JAPAN, April 1996, available at <http://www.japaninc.net/computingjapan/magazine/issues/1996/apr96/04phs.html>.)

Regardless of the success or failure of the PHS technology, it is quite clear from the Sakabe reference that "receptacles 30" are not enclosed within "exchange box 10". Rather, they are separate components installed remotely from "exchange box 10". This is not applicants' invention. Claim 63 of applicants' claims expressly recite that the "housing" of the "data outlet" "encloses" "premises interface circuitry" which provides "user data interfaces". The amendment hereinabove to recite the term "compact" in claim 63 serves only to further underscores this unitary configuration. The dispersed isolated components are not enclosed within a "compact housing".

The section 102 rejection should be withdrawn.

Applicants' also considered the section 103 rejection presented in the outstanding Office Action. This rejection, however, relies upon the Sakabe reference as its primary reference. The gaps of the Sakabe reference are not traversed by the examiner's secondary reliance on either the Menon and/or Vaughan references.

The section 103 rejection should also be withdrawn.

Conclusion

The pending claims define subject matter neither described nor suggested by the cited art references. The written description and claims meet all applicable statutory requirements. The application is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,


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